

state. In addition to directing administrative support, she was responsible for managing an extensive casework portfolio and overseeing Senatorial United States Service Academy nominations.

In 2003, Ms. Smith would transition to the office of United States Congressman Jeb Hensarling (TX-05), where she would assume the role of Senior Constituent Liaison. As part of her duties, Maggie maintained casework operations and fostered strategic relationships on behalf of the Congressman between federal agencies and community leaders. Maggie also managed a wide variety of programs and events while working alongside colleagues in both the Washington, D.C. and district offices.

Following Congressman Hensarling's retirement in 2018, Maggie served the people of Texas' Third Congressional District as a Senior Constituent Services Coordinator, where she would assist with casework and community outreach across Collin County. During her time working for Congress, Maggie has been recognized as a respected professional, esteemed for her past efforts across the state.

Now upon her retirement and as she begins a new season of life, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Ms. Margaret Smith for her longtime service and to wish her well on her future endeavors.

#### WORLD SCIENTISTS' WARNING OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2021*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Madam Speaker, climate change is an existential threat to all of humanity, and it is essential that we start acting—now—to stop and reverse the destructive effects of climate change.

In 2020, my constituent Oregon State University Professor Dr. William Ripple, and colleagues published "World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency" which has been endorsed by more than 11,000 scientists from 153 countries. They presented six transformative steps we can take to effectively combat climate change.

I urge my colleagues to read their report and join me in acting before it is too late.

[From Bioscience, Jan. 2020]

#### WORLD SCIENTISTS' WARNING OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

(By William J. Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Thomas M. Newsome, Phoebe Barnard, William R. Moomaw, and 11,092 scientist signatories from 153 countries)

Scientists have a moral obligation to clearly warn humanity of any catastrophic threat and "tell it like it is." Based on this obligation and the data presented below, we herein proclaim, with more than 11,000 scientist signatories from around the world, a clear and unequivocal declaration that a climate emergency exists on planet Earth.

Exactly 40 years ago, scientists from 50 nations met at the First World Climate Conference (Geneva, 1979) and agreed that alarming trends for climate change made it "urgently necessary" to act. Since then, similar alarms have been made through the 1992 Rio Summit, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the 2015 Paris Agreement, as well as scores of other global assemblies and scientists' explicit

warnings of insufficient progress. Yet greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are still rising, with increasingly damaging effects on the Earth's climate. An immense change of scale in endeavors to conserve our biosphere is needed to avoid untold suffering due to the climate crisis.

Despite 40 years of global climate negotiations, with few exceptions, we have generally conducted business as usual and have largely failed to address this predicament. The climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected. It is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity. Especially worrisome are potential climate tipping points and nature's reinforcing feedbacks that could lead to a catastrophic "Hothouse Earth" and cause significant disruptions to ecosystems, society, and economies, potentially making large areas of Earth uninhabitable.

To secure a sustainable future, we must change how we live. Economic and population growth are among the most important drivers of increases in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion; thus, we need bold and drastic transformations regarding economic and population policies. We suggest six critical and interrelated steps that governments, businesses and the rest of humanity can take to lessen the worst effects of climate change. These are important steps, but are not the only actions needed or possible.

1) Energy. The world must quickly implement massive energy efficiency and conservation practices, replace fossil fuels with low carbon renewables and other cleaner sources of energy. We should leave remaining stocks of fossil fuels in the ground, and carefully pursue effective negative emissions using technology such as carbon extraction from the source and capture from the air, and by enhancing natural systems (Step 3). Wealthier countries need to support poorer nations in transitioning away from fossil fuels. We must swiftly eliminate subsidies to fossil fuel corporations and use effective and fair schemes for steadily escalating carbon prices to restrain the use of fossil fuels.

2) Short-lived pollutants. We need to promptly reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants, including methane, black carbon (soot), and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Doing this could slow climate feedbacks and potentially reduce the short-term warming trend by >50% over the next few decades while saving millions of lives and increasing crop yields due to reduced air pollution. The 2016 Kigali amendment to phase down HFCs is welcomed.

3) Nature. We must protect and restore Earth's ecosystems. Phytoplankton, coral reefs, forests, savannas, grasslands, wetlands, peatlands, soils, mangroves, and sea grasses contribute greatly to sequestration of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. Marine and terrestrial plants, animals, and microorganisms play significant roles in carbon and nutrient cycling and storage. We need to quickly curtail forest and biodiversity loss, protecting the remaining primary and intact forests, while accomplishing reforestation and afforestation where appropriate at enormous scales. Although available land may be limiting in places, up to a third of emissions reductions needed by 2030 for the Paris agreement (<2°C) could be obtained with these natural climate solutions.

4) Food. Eating mostly plant-based foods while reducing the global consumption of animal products, especially ruminant livestock, can improve human health and significantly lower GHG emissions (including methane in step 2). Moreover, this will free up croplands for growing much needed human plant food instead of livestock feed, while releasing some grazing land to support

natural climate solutions (step 3). Cropping practices such as minimum tillage that increase soil carbon are vitally important. We need to drastically reduce the enormous amount of food waste around the world.

5) Economy. Excessive extraction of materials and overexploitation of ecosystems, driven by economic growth, must be quickly curtailed to maintain long-term sustainability of the biosphere. We need a carbon-free economy that explicitly addresses human dependence on the biosphere and policies that guide economic decisions accordingly. Goals need to shift from GDP growth and the pursuit of affluence toward supporting ecosystem and human wellbeing by prioritizing basic needs and reducing inequality.

6) Population. Still increasing by roughly 80 million people per year or >200,000 per day, we must stabilize and ideally gradually reduce the world population within a framework that ensures social integrity. There are proven and effective policies that strengthen human rights, while lowering fertility rates and lessening the impacts of population growth on GHG emissions and biodiversity loss. These policies involve making family planning services available to all people and achieving full gender equity, including primary and secondary education as a global norm for all, especially girls and young women.

Mitigating and adapting to climate change while honoring the diversity of humans entails major transformations in the ways our global society functions and interacts with natural ecosystems. We are encouraged by a recent surge of concern. Governmental bodies are making climate emergency declarations. Schoolchildren are striking. Ecocide lawsuits are proceeding in the courts. Grassroots citizen movements are demanding change, and many countries, states and provinces, cities, and businesses are responding.

As an Alliance of World Scientists, we stand ready to assist decision makers in a just transition to a sustainable and equitable future. The good news is that such transformative change, with social and economic justice for all, promises far greater human wellbeing in the long run than does business as usual. We believe that prospects will be greatest if decision makers and all of humanity promptly respond to this warning and declaration of a climate emergency, and act to sustain life on planet Earth, our only home.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LOWER THE LEGAL VOTING AGE TO SIXTEEN

**HON. GRACE MENG**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2021*

Ms. MENG. Madam Speaker, throughout our nation's history—from the Vietnam war-era movement that sparked the 26th Amendment to the students of Stoneman Douglas High School demanding action against gun violence—the power of youth activism has undeniably and profoundly impacted cultural and political movements throughout our nation's history. The modern fight against climate change continues to be led by young adults who recognize they will face the consequences of decisions that we make today.

Madam Speaker, it is time to give them a voice in our democracy by permitting them to be heard at the ballot box.

Sixteen-year-olds are legally permitted to work and pay federal income tax on their earnings. They are legally permitted to drive motor vehicles, and if they commit crimes they are tried as adults. If 16-year-olds are impacted by our laws, it is only fair that they be allowed to choose their representatives. Granting 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote ensures that their concerns and voices are heard by policymakers. Lowering the voting age can also strengthen civics education in our schools by making content relevant to students' lives, and incentivizing schools to prioritize civics.

Madam Speaker, research has shown that voting is a habitual behavior, which is why 16 is a better time than 18 to acquire the habit of voting. Numerous cities across our nation have already passed ordinances allowing 16-year-olds to vote in local municipal elections. Data from five cities in Maryland—which were among the first in America to lower the voting age to 16 for local elections—shows 16- and 17-year-olds have turned out to vote at equal or higher rates than voters from older age groups.

When individuals participate in democratic processes from a young age, they form lifelong habits of civic participation and voter engagement. Nineteen states already allow for 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections prior to them turning 18.

Madam Speaker, lowering the voting age to 16 will only strengthen our democratic institutions by exposing youth to our most sacred civic duty of voting. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation as we empower America's youth to help shape and guide our nation by allowing them to vote in all elections.

TRIBUTE TO MS. BARBARA  
BEATRICE WALKER

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2021*

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, Barbara Beatrice Walker was the true essence of love, hope and charity. She had and constantly demonstrated a warm, caring and giving spirit. Born and raised in Mississippi, Barbara always spoke fondly of her childhood and had a real sense of affection for the Piney Wood Boarding School which she attended and gave a great deal of credit for helping her to become the person that I and countless others came to know and love. She moved to Chicago, had a very successful career working for Cook County Health Services, married her husband Edgar and to their union, Michele was born. Barbara was totally devoted to Michele and to her son Herschel and ultimately Herschel Jr., her grandson and great grandson. Barbara was an active member of the 7th Congressional District Peoples Assembly where she often brought Southern style cooked food to feed the Congressman and I shall never forget it. Condolences to her family and we thank her for her service to humanity.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if I have not charity then I am nothing."

HONORING THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ON THE OCCASION OF ITS BICENTENNIAL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2021*

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor The George Washington University on the occasion of its bicentennial.

For two centuries, generations of students from around the world have come to The George Washington University (GW) to take full advantage of the unparalleled academic opportunities that accompany its unique vantage point in the heart of the nation's capital.

Indeed, the entire GW community is unique in that, regardless of what discipline one may choose to pursue there, all have chosen to attend the university because of their desire to make a difference in the world and their ability to utilize GW's vast network of partnerships, access and policy initiatives to translate that desire into action.

With its decades-long working relationships with nearly every federal agency, as well as numerous international multilateral organizations, the university's faculty have long been an indispensable source of groundbreaking research and ideas that not only create new knowledge but also transform policy that affects millions of people in their daily lives. While GW's traditional areas of strength have long been regarded as law, media and policy-making, the university is also pioneering discoveries in cybersecurity, tissue regeneration, robotics, autism, fighting extremism, HIV/AIDS, combating violence against women and girls worldwide, nanotechnology and building sustainable ecosystems, among many other areas. It should not come as a surprise that GW's doctors, researchers and public health officials have been at the forefront of COVID-19 research since the beginning and are diligently working to help address this urgent problem.

Moreover, the collective force of GW's two centuries is embodied by its distinguished alumni—now numbering more than 290,000 in 130 countries worldwide—whose ranks include some of the most consequential leaders of our time in practically every pursuit.

Furthermore, as a hub of intellect and dynamic human capital, the university continues to infuse the District of Columbia with its exciting mixture of ideas, diversity and youthful energy, which has made it an essential part of the city's civic and cultural life since its very founding.

Yet, none of this great success was either inevitable or preordained. It was only achieved by the commitment of generations of students, alumni, faculty and staff to build GW into a preeminent global research institution.

I ask the House of Representatives to join me in thanking and congratulating GW for two centuries of accomplishment and positive impact on the District, the rest of the nation and the world. I wish the university continued success into its third century and beyond.

HONORING THE LIFE OF GENE BARBARET

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2021*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great regret that I rise today to mourn and observe the passing of an eternal educator, Dr. Gene Barbaret of Mansfield, Connecticut. Having lived a full and active life, Gene passed away on his 101st birthday on January 11, 2021 due to complications related to the coronavirus.

Gene's life was intrinsically American, and he dedicated his lifeforce toward professorial teaching and sharpening the mind. To this end, Gene contributed a palpable value toward the strength and productivity of eastern Connecticut's community, the region I have the honor of representing. Dr. Barbaret, a first-generation scholar born to parents who immigrated from Alsace, France, was always eager to observe and take from his environment as the youngest of eight siblings. His story will be remembered by many as one of vigor, decency, and a passion for cultural enrichment.

As a lifelong learner, Gene was always destined to become the wisest of educators. His potential in the education industry was reflected from the start, such as when he graduated coaledictorian from Watertown High School in his hometown of Oakville, Connecticut. His deep French roots struck a clear cord with him from early on as well, motivating Mr. Barbaret to achieve a bachelors degree in French studies in 1941. Taking a break from his studies, Gene heeded the call to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Upon his return from the war, however, Gene resumed a determined effort to expand upon his roots—transitioning his education to Princeton University and going on to achieve a masters and subsequent doctoral degree in French literature by 1951.

Not one to let knowledge go to waste, Gene brought his specialization back to our home state of Connecticut before obtaining his doctoral in 1949, marking the genesis of a career in sharing his experience as a faculty of the University of Connecticut (UConn). Dr. Barbaret went on to educate French Literature within UConn's Department of Modern and Classical Languages, building a true and personal connection to the University over the course of 40 years. He achieved this not by simply mastering lectures, but also by broadening his perspective alongside the very students he taught. As a professor, he personally oversaw the University's year long study abroad program to France, journeying with certain students across the Atlantic to better understand the international community and our place in it. Dr. Barbaret's impact cannot be understated—throughout his long tenure he came to be recognized with a variety of honors and accolades, eventually even becoming knighted as a chevalier by the French government for his contributions to the nation's culture. As a fondly remembered mentor and a good scholar, multiple scholarship funds were established under the University in his name to stimulate excellence in French.

Dr. Barbaret retired from UConn in 1990 as a revered professor emeritus. Though UConn